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"Doing History" in the NPS

Shaping the Future of the NPS History Program

Stephanie Toothman

Every profession has its own folklore, as well as its own standards and areas of special concern. National Park Service historians are no exception. In our case, gatherings of NPS historians inevitably seem to lead to reminiscing by our senior colleagues about the "good old days," when every historical area in the system had its park historian doing primary research to guide the park's development and interpretation of its historical resources. These conversations lead to discussions about who is filling that role now that the position of ranger-historian is extinct and the number of park historians has dwindled to "endangered species" status. As experiences in different parks and regions are swapped and compared, it becomes evident that we lack a comprehensive overview of who is doing what in the area of historical research, interpretation, writing, and publication in the National Park Service.

During the 1987 workshop for NPS historians at Mather Training Center, these discussions took place within the more formal structure of a workshop session. As the leader for this segment of the session, I introduced a proposal that had been discussed informally with a number of colleagues. We recommended that a survey of NPS personnel be designed and distributed to solicit answers to a range of questions dealing with the who, when, where and what of "doing" history in the Service. In a follow-up session, more than a third of the workshop participants, including park, regional and Denver Service Center historians, identified topics and questions to be incorporated into the survey. With this information in hand, a draft was prepared during the summer and circulated for comment among the workshop participants and at the Western historians workshop at Channel Islands National Park last October. Chief Historian Ed Bearss also reviewed it and received the endorsement of Associate Director Rogers and Director Mott for the survey project.

In the course of our initial discussions about the survey, we turned our attention to the need for an appropriate forum for the survey. The *CRM Bulletin* offered us an opportunity to reach all NPS employees and to make the survey the centerpiece of an issue devoted to the status of historical research in the Service. Also included in this issue are the first annual listing of ongoing historical research projects compiled by Bureau Historian Barry Mackintosh and a series of essays reflecting the perspectives of historians in a variety of positions and locales within the Service.

There are a number of topics related to the status and activities of historians in the Service that are of great concern to the Service's historians and are not addressed in any depth in this issue. Among them are the present relationship between historians and

interpreters in conducting and using historical research, opportunities for presenting historical research in forums outside of the Service, and the perceptions of our colleagues outside of the Service about the nature and quality of our history programs. As several of the questions in the survey touch on these issues, a follow-up issue presenting the results of the survey may provide an opportunity to discuss these and other relevant issues.

The survey's usefulness depends in large measure on the response from you, the readers of the *CRM Bulletin.* Without a broad-based response from the full range of NPS personnel involved in historical research and interpretation, the value of the survey results could be seriously compromised. This is not just for those of you who happen to have the title "historian." It is for all of you— superintendents, rangers, interpreters, and resource managers— who have some responsibility for managing our historical resources. All of us who have been involved in this project urge you to take the time to fill out the questionnaire. Your responses will be kept confidential and you need not give us your name or locale. Your candid and thoughtful responses are what we are looking for.

Let's take the discussions about our present and future out of the realm of anecdotes and speculation. We need a firm foundation of fact—answers to the who, when, what and where—on which to shape the future direction of our history programs.

The author is regional historian, Pacific Northwest Region, National Park Service. Dr. Toothman coordinated this issue of the *CRM Bulletin.*

Postscript. *A survey recently undertaken at Director Bill Mott's request demonstrates that there is a surprisingly large number of superintendents, chiefs of interpretation and resources management, and interpreters— with degrees in history— assigned to our cultural areas. Many of these people are outstanding communicators with as many or more publications to their credit than many of our historians in the 170 series. This underscores the need for the enclosed questionnaire, so the NPS can know and appreciate the contributions of historians, be they "170s" or "025s," in supporting the cultural resources and interpretation missions of the Service with scholarly research. Frequently, these efforts are not recognized by senior management or their peers in the 170 series. One regional historian habitually refers to field people involved in or responsible for park interpretive programs in a condescending manner as "park rangers." Service historians, whether in the 025 or 170 series, can ill-afford such an elitist attitude, particularly when those in the parks are our front line for interpreting our areas to our visitors, be it through oral presentations or publications.*

—Edwin C. Bearss

Public History: Personal Responsibility

Jerry L. Rogers

Historians, as keepers of the social memory, have a powerful responsibility to the truth. Because this duty is best policed by force of conscience, it is one of the more interesting ethical standards among professions. Historians may thrive or suffer because of peer opinion, or they may be tempted or threatened because of the need to please higher authorities, but the real test is the inner ethical standard of the individual.

This does not mean that historians are never wrong. It simply means that they must do their best not to be wrong and—in the practice of history at least—they may never lie. It does not mean that there are not fools and charlatans who call themselves historians, but fools and charlatans are encouraged to find guidance elsewhere than the *CRM Bulletin.* It does not mean that others, including higher authorities, must always accept the judgment of historians, but those others should not only respect the historian's ethic—they should demand it.

Political leaders and public administrators who deal with historical matters will, whether or not they should, from time to time are contrary to the historian’s ethic. When they choose to do so, within their lawful authorities, they have an obligation to be fully aware of their departures from history. They have entered dangerous territory, and it is only a short journey from that point to serious abuse. In a National Historic Landmark dedication for Manzanar Relocation Camp (where American citizens of Japanese ancestry were forcibly detained without trial during World War II) I observed that virtually all nations make official use of the past in the name of history. Repressive regimes are especially prone to manipulating history in order to sustain themselves in power. In an extreme example, I read of North Korea placing a "historical" marker at a spot where the current dictator's son and presumed successor had enjoyed a picnic. On a higher plane, almost all governments use history to celebrate the major achievements of their societies. Federal, State, and local examples are so numerous in the United States there is no need to mention specific ones. The greatest nations go one step farther and also use history to help future generations avoid error. Perhaps Manzanar can help us understand how much we have changed in the brief time since World War II. Perhaps it can help us retain the best aspects of that change and thus prevent future denial of civil rights. A similar motivation is behind Director Bill Mott's well-known search for a place where the history of slavery can be interpreted. When handling sensitive subjects like these, historians may be urged by some either to spice up or to tone down the truth in order to make a story more interesting or more politically suitable. When leaders require distortion, a country has already missed greatness; when historians accede to it, a society is decadent.

I am not inciting historians to rebellion. The public historian's job is to provide correct information and to do his or her best to help the agency find solutions that are compatible with the historian's ethic. The public administrator's task is similar, since there is great peril in ignoring the advice of any of the wide range of ethically-bound professionals within an agency. In the rare instances when push comes to shove, it is important to be courteous, cooperative, and creative, but the historian must hold fast to the ethical standard. I insist upon it among people who work under my direction and I will defend it among others.

The author is Associate Director, Cultural Resources in the National Park Service.

The History Division and the Chief Historians—An Overview

Edwin C. Bearss

It has been more than 56 years since Verne E. Chatelain reported for duty as a staff historian in the National Park Service's Washington Office. Chatelain, formerly head of the History and Social Sciences Department at Nebraska State Teachers College, had been hired by Director Horace M. Albright, a keen student of history, to develop a program aimed at interpreting and preserving sites and structures associated with the history of our country. Several months earlier, the Service had employed two park historians—Elbert Cox and B. Floyd Flickinger—who were assigned to Colonial National Monument. The two young historians entered on duty at an exciting but hectic time, because on October 19, 1931, the Nation would celebrate the sesquicentennial of the British surrender at Yorktown to American and French forces commanded by Gen. George Washington.

Chatelain found himself assigned to the Branch of Research and Education led by Harold C. Bryant, where he headed the newly constituted History Division. The division remained a small operation, consisting of Chatelain and a secretary, until the March 4, 1933, inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt as 32nd President and the advent of the New Deal. Much of Chatelain's time and energy during these early years was spent laying the groundwork for an effective program of interpreting the Service's historical resources to park visitors to complement the natural science and archeological programs that had been in place and had become a hallmark at the great western parks. Chatelain also played an important role in planning the campaign that resulted in the establishment by Congress of Morristown National Historic Park.

The next few years were exciting and productive for Chief Historian Chatelain and the History Division as the Service's commitment to historic interpretation and preservation skyrocketed. The Emergency Conservation Works (ECW) program gave birth to the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and the number of units in the National Park System more than doubled on August 10, 1933, when an Executive order was implemented consolidating all national parks and national monuments, all military parks, 11 national cemeteries, all national memorials, and the parks of the National Capital under National Park Service administration.

In congressional hearings in the late 1920s, Director Albright had taken the stance that the Service, because of its experience in public education and resource management, could better interpret the military parks than the War Department. In staffing the new historical parks, the Service now had to insure that key employees possessed a background in history.

CCC camps were established in many Service areas, and to oversee preservation projects historians were hired and paid out of ECW funds. Many of the newly recruited historians, before being assigned to the field, worked directly for Chief Historian Chatelain on park-related research projects. Office space for these professionals was secured at the Library of Congress. Within less than six months, Chatelain had direct supervision over more historians than graced the departments of major universities. Most of these historians were soon assigned to the field or to field offices (the precursors of regional offices) that were established to oversee ECW projects focusing on state and municipal parks.

Through the efforts of many people— including Park Service Director Arno B. Cammerer and Chief Historian Chatelain—the Historic Sites Act was drafted, amended, and passed by Congress, and on August 21, 1935, signed by President Roosevelt. The Act established a "national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States." Among the missions it gave the Secretary of the Interior and the National Park

Service were to survey historic properties "for the purpose of determining which possess exceptional value as commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States."

The History Division, redesignated the Branch of Historic Sites and Buildings, was delegated the task of undertaking the National Survey which commenced in 1937, and was closed down in the weeks following the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor.

Chatelain, because of a rift with the strong-willed and mercurial Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes, only served as acting assistant director of the Branch of Historic Sites and Buildings. When he left the Service in August 1936, he was succeeded as acting director by Branch Spaulding (a field administrator with a background in history). Spaulding was retained in an acting capacity until May 15, 1938, when he returned to the superintendency of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park. During the Spaulding months, in July 1937, four regional offices were established. When staffed, each regional office had a regional historian. Ronald F. Lee, who had entered the Service in 1933 at Shiloh National Military Park, succeeded Spaulding and was named supervisor of the Branch of Historic Sites and Buildings. Lee wore a "second hat" as the Service's chief historian.

Lee, like Chatelain, was a strong energetic personality and superior administrator who left his stamp on the Service and its history program. Unlike Chatelain, Lee was diplomatic and adept at working within the system. An August 1938 reorganization saw the unit headed by Chief Historian Lee redesignated the Branch of Historic Sites and divided into Historic Sites and Archeological Sites divisions. Three years later, an archeology division was added to the branch. The austerity and retrenchment of the World War II years found the headquarters of the National Park Service relocated from Washington, DC, to Chicago's Merchandise Mart. With Chief Historian Lee on active duty with the armed services, Herbert E. Kahler—like Lee a former University of Minnesota graduate student who had entered on duty as a park historian at Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park in 1933—headed a lean and mean reorganized Branch of History as its acting chief.

By February 1946 the Service was again headquartered in Washington, and Lee—back from the military— resumed the chief historian's position and headed the Branch of History, consisting of Archeological and Interpretive divisions. A March 31, 1951, reorganization of the Washington office found Lee elevated to one of the Service's three assistant directors. Reporting to Lee were four divisions, one being the History Division headed by Chief Historian Herbert Kahler.

Lee, during his years as chief historian and branch chief, saw preservation, construction, and interpretive programs first pared in the months following the September 1, 1939, German attack on Poland and terminated in the months immediately following Pearl Harbor. The post-World War II years, with the end of rationing and the introduction of the five-day work week, found the American public taking to the road in record numbers, and visits to parks, both cultural and natural, zooming. Park Service budgets and personnel ceilings did not increase to meet this challenge, because with a post-war boom in the economy there was little need or desire for an Emergency Conservation Works program. Lee's office and the regional and park historians had to do more with less.

Chief Historian Lee, a low-key but persuasive and perceptive leader adept at working with disparate and often competing groups, made use of these talents to mobilize a formidable preservation coalition from within and outside the Service that led to action by Congress in 1949 that resulted in chartering the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Henceforth, Service preservationists would have allies in heightening the public's consciousness of the need to preserve and protect what was significant in America's cultural past and providing alternatives to National Park Service administration of sites and structures.

In 1948, Lee was a leader in the small core of NPS employees, most of whom were historians, who organized the Eastern National Park & Monument Association (ENP&MA), a cooperating association chartered to provide quality interpretive products

and services to visitors at NPS areas and plow profits back into member Service areas to enrich interpretive and research programs. ENP&MA has grown from a small "mom and pop" operation into a multi-million dollar association that in 1988 numbered 121 agencies, grossed more that $11,300,000, and provided the Service with more than $1,000,000 to enable member parks to meet interpretive and research initiatives that are beyond available NPS resources. ENP&MA and its successes are a fitting legacy to Ronald F. Lee and his associates.

Herbert E. Kahler succeeded Lee as chief historian and head of the History Division on April 1, 1951, and held this position until December 31, 1964, longer than any other person. A 1954 reorganization found the History Division becoming a branch in the Interpretive Division headed by Lee. On January 1, 1959, Lee became the Region V director and Daniel B. Beard was promoted from superintendent of Everglades National Park to chief of the Division of Interpretation. A December 1961 reorganization resulted in the establishment of a History and Archeology Division as one of the seven divisions reporting to an Assistant Director for Conservation, Interpretation and Use.

Herb Kahler, a gregarious and frequent visitor to the field, went that extra mile to get to know and bolster the morale of park historians. The staff of the History Division, as it had since 1948, included three to four staff historians and a chief curator. Besides responding to inquiries from the Congress and to calls for studies and reports by the Directorate and the Department, the Division was responsible for developing and overseeing policy and guidelines as they applied to the Service's historical resources.

In 1951, Director Arthur E. Demaray initiated the Administrative History Program. All units in the System were to prepare and maintain an administrative history to provide an institutional memory for the parks, thereby insuring that the staffs were apprised of opportunities and challenges. Failure by the History Division to give firm guidance and to promptly prepare and distribute a model administrative history and the advent of MISSION 66, a 10-year rehabilitation and capital development program, first slowed and then stalled this initiative.

MISSION 66, as to be expected, monopolized the time and energy of the Branch of History from 1955 through Mr. Kahler's retirement. There were programming and budgeting calls for hundreds of projects followed by reviews and comments focusing on master plans, interpretive prospectuses, wayside exhibit plans, and historic structure reports needed to implement Director Conrad L. Wirth's bold initiative to bring park facilities, staffing, and resource preservation up to standard by 1966, the Service's 50th anniversary.

In 1957, the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings was reactivated. It was headed by a historian reporting to Kahler and staffed by historians assigned to each of the five regional offices. The Survey became an important Service tool for recognizing and encouraging the preservation of nationally significant properties regardless of ownership through the National Historic Landmarks program. In 1960, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton underscored the importance of the survey and program when he found 92 historic sites and buildings eligible for landmark designation.

Robert M. Utley, Kahler's successor as chief historian, was a NPS veteran. He had "cut his teeth" as a 17-year-old seasonal historian at Custer Battlefield National Monument prior to seven years' service in Santa Fe, New Mexico, first as site survey historian and then as regional historian for the Southwest Region. Utley possessed impressive credentials as a historian of the Army in the West, whose many publications have been and continue to be acclaimed by scholars as well as the public. As chief historian, Utley was singularly successful in melding his talents as a respected, much-published historian and an effective and innovative bureaucrat.

Utley's leadership of the History Division coincided with the years of George B. Hartzog, Jr., as Director. This was an exciting and productive period. Hartzog, a dynamic, politically astute, and hard-driving leader, lashed out with a number of bold new initiatives aimed at expanding the National Park System and asserting the Service's leadership in the

preservation movement that led to and followed passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Hartzog was also a tinkerer, sometimes shooting from the hip, and instituted a number of reorganizations that had major repercussions for Utley's History Division, field historians, and the program. The first of these was implemented in December 1965 and resulted in the establishment of a Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services that reported to the Assistant Director for Operations.

Utley's History Division was responsible to the Assistant Director, Resource Studies. The close relationship on the Washington, regional, and park levels that dated to 1931 and the beginning of the Service's history program was sundered. Next, in the winter and spring of 1966, all programmed history research was centralized in Chief Historian Utley's office. To accomplish this, a corps of base-funded senior historians was assigned to Utley's staff. The regional historian positions were deemed superfluous and phased out.

This Hartzog reorganization had short-term benefits but its long-term effects caused problems that historians and cultural resource interpreters are still seeking to bridge. Centralization of history research under the inspired leadership of Bob Utley and the forthright, hard-driving Chief of Park History Studies, Roy E. Appleman, was cost-effective, responsive, and productive. It also provided Utley with a reservoir of talent to draw on in exercising his responsibilities for seeing that the parks were managed to insure that the historic resources were preserved and protected. The decisions to centralize research in Washington, abolish the regional historian positions, and emphasize communication skills at the expense of subject expertise in the field had unfortunate and long-lasting consequences. Positions formerly designated as park historians were reclassified and redesignated as interpreters, park technicians, and chiefs of information, and frequently downgraded.

In April 1970, Utley's empire was dismantled when Director Hartzog implemented another reorganization that broke up the corps of base-funded research historians and reassigned most of them to one of then two Service Centers, where they were project-funded. Henceforth, the slimmed-down chief historian's office would focus on budgets, policy, legislative liaison, compliance, and the National Historic Landmarks program.

Coincident with the organization and staffing of a Branch of Park History Studies, the Site Survey was centralized and staffed in Washington, an editor employed, and an ambitious publications program inaugurated. Before it was phased out in 1979, 12 handsome, copiously illustrated volumes, organized by theme and featuring the work of the National Survey, were published.

On October 15, 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the National Historic Preservation Act. This legislation, which expanded the National Register, established the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and provided for review of federal actions affecting properties listed in the National Register, had far-reaching and immediate repercussions for Chief Historian Utley, the history program, and the Service. Utley, who had worked closely with Director Hartzog and Ronald F. Lee to insure that the bill as enacted continued to recognize the Department of the Interior as the lead federal agency in historic preservation, chaired the task force that in 1966-67 drafted the guidelines and standards to establish and institutionalize the National Register.

A July 1967 Hartzog reorganization, resulting from the recommendations of a three-man committee chaired by former Chief Historian Lee, led to establishment of an Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation headed by Dr. Ernest A. Connally, an articulate and urbane architectural historian well known in the academic and preservation communities. To underscore the interdisciplinary approach to historic preservation, three divisions—History, Archeology, and Historic Architecture— reported to Connally.

From April 1970 until September 1973 Chief Historian Utley and the History Division were responsible for the Historic Sites Survey, policy and standards, and advising the Director on matters pertaining to history. In 1970, a team of historians prepared the cultural

resource component of the *National Park System Plan,* published in 1972, a blueprint for a drastic expansion of the System. Hartzog was fired as Director in December of 1972.

A March 30, 1972, reorganization, the last one associated with George Hartzog, found Connally becoming Associate Director for Professional Services and Utley stepping up to chief of the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation. The History Division, one of four divisions reporting to Utley, was headed by Dr. A. Russell Mortensen, who joined the History Division from the University of Utah in the autumn of 1970.

Mortensen was a personable and well-meaning academician with strong links to the Western History Association, but slight appreciation of the mission of the Service, its areas, and its history program. A mid-September 1973 reorganization that separated Connally's associate directorship into two groups of offices with oversight of cultural resource programs enabled the Service to make better use of Mortensen's talents. Mortensen was promoted and named Assistant Director for Archeology and Historic Preservation, overseeing four divisions concerned with administration of programs external to the National Park System. This reorganization saw the Sites Survey

separated from the History Division and assigned to Mortensen's assistant directorship. This decision was justified on the premise that the survey and designation of National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) affected properties outside the System and as NHLs were entered into the National Register there must be close linkage with the National Register Division.

Bob Utley, because of his familiarity with the NPS and its areas, became Assistant Director, Park Historic Preservation. Reporting to Utley were three divisions—History, Archeology, and Historic Architecture—that were responsible for oversight of policy, guidelines, and standards as applied to cultural resource properties managed by the NPS. Dr. Harry W. Pfanz, a 17-year NPS veteran with a deserved reputation for hard work, candor, and conservatism, was made chief historian, a position he held until his December 30, 1980, retirement. These were trying years for the History Division, as well as the other Washington offices involved with management of the Service's cultural properties. On May 14, 1976, a reorganization consolidated the three divisions into a Cultural Resource Management Division. Utley, dismayed at the low profile given cultural resources by Director Gary Everhardt, left the Service to become Deputy Executive Director of the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation and was replaced by F. Ross Holland. Twenty-six months later, in July 1978, with President Jimmy Carter in the White House, there was a major departmental reorganization. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the divisions belonging to Connally's associate directorship were reorganized by Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus into a new bureau—the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. Coincidentally, the Cultural Resources Management Division was elevated to an assistant directorship and the History Branch again became a division.

Administrative actions and bureaucratic decisions over which Chief Historian Pfanz had little control made his years as chief historian a retrenchment period. How to best secure and expedite compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 was a major challenge. The History Division took the lead in working with Bob Utley of the Advisory Council in implementing programmatic memorandums of agreement with the Advisory Council and the State Historic Preservation Officers to facilitate and expedite cultural resource and planning compliance actions on broad categories of activities. An essential element of these programmatic actions was monitoring and review of action documents, and this compelled the Service to reestablish and staff regional historian positions in the ten regional offices.

In 1974 and 1977, the History Division had the lead in developing and revising Chapter V of the Management Policies focusing on cultural resources. The History Division, working closely with the Anthropology and Historic Architecture divisions, wrote and issued the first release of *NPS-28, Cultural Resources Management Guideline.*

Long before the January 1979 Harpers Ferry workshop, it had become apparent to senior Service historians and interpreters, knowledgeable park visitors, and congressional

staffers that the mid-1960s decision to downplay the role and contributions of the professional discipline specialists in favor of the communicators at parks was misguided. Prodded by Congress, senior cultural resource professionals, interpreters, and managers at the Harpers Ferry workshop recommended that the Service take steps to again emphasize the need for the interpretive staffs at the parks to be firmly grounded in their professions as well as be good communicators. This recommendation was endorsed by the directorate, and by the mid-1980s many cultural parks had on their staffs capable and articulate discipline specialists, many with publication and research credits in their vitas.

Another thrust emerging from the Harpers Ferry workshop to which Chief Historian Pfanz was deeply committed was taking action to combat and bring to the directorate's attention the incompatible uses in many cultural areas, particularly military parks, near large urban areas. This had also been called to the Service's attention by Congress.

Among the first initiatives undertaken by Secretary of the Interior James G. Watt in 1981 was to abolish the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. Those divisions concerned with external cultural resources, headed by Associate Director Jerry L. Rogers, returned to the National Park Service. An element of this reorganization included the beefing up of the History Division through a reassignment to it of the designation and dedesignation functions of the National Historic Landmarks program. As acting chief historian for most of 1981, Benjamin Levy oversaw the reactivation of this old line program which had atrophied during the HCRS years.

On November 1, 1981, Edwin C. Bearss was named chief historian, and Ben Levy became his strong "right arm" as the office's senior historian with responsibilities for the NHL and compliance activities. The NHL program was particularly important, because the Reagan administration gave high priority to the identification and recognition of nationally significant sites and structures and their preservation by individuals and groups outside the Service. But, before it could be full speed ahead, the 1980 amendments to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 made it necessary to prepare, secure the approval of, and publish in the *Federal Register* regulations governing the NHL program. This was accomplished in 1982.

Then, in February 1983, to insure a better use of resources and promote efficiency through recognition that a number of the external and internal cultural resource programs were interdependent, the associate directorates for National Register Programs and Cultural Resources Management (including the History, Anthropology, Historic Architecture, and Curatorial Services divisions) were merged. Jerry Rogers, a skilled administrator sensitive to the need for Park Service historians to work with the state historic preservation offices, the preservation community, academia, local governments, and other outside parties to meet the challenges of the 1980s, was named to head the new associate directorate. The post-1983 organization of those offices on the Washington level concerned with cultural resources represented a return to the situation as it existed before the 1973 reorganization.

Edwin C. Bearss

Ed Bearss, a Service veteran since 1955 and a noted Civil War author and battlefield guide, reinvigorated the History Division with his dynamic leadership style honed in the U.S. Marine Corps. Bearss won the support of Director Russell E. Dickenson (a fellow former Marine) for an expanded National Historic Landmarks program and a revived administrative history program—the latter entailing appointment of a bureau historian to the staff for the first time. Bearss's unpretentious, yet commanding, presence also endeared him and his division to Dickenson's successor, William Penn Mott, Jr., and Secretary of the Interior Donald Paul Hodel, who invited the chief historian to lecture him and his top staff on the history of the Interior Department and commissioned the division to complete a publication on that subject.

Bearss's reputation beyond the National Park Service has had additional repercussions, as when Secretary of the Army John O. Marsh and Army Chief of Staff

Gen. John A. Wickham enlisted him in 1985 to lead them and the Army's top generals on a terrain walk at Antietam National Battlefield—the first of several such exercises reviving one of the original purposes of the battlefield parks as training grounds for military leaders. His personal relationship with the Secretary of the Army would profit the Service on other occasions involving cooperation with the military.

As one who attained distinction in both interpretation and research during this Service career, Bearss believes strongly that historical park interpreters should be park historians in fact if not title—experts in their subject matter capable of research pertinent to it. His tenure has been marked by a significant return of employees with professional historical training to historical park interpretation. Although the chief historian and the History Division exercise no line supervision over the park historians, the professional leadership and example of the division are vital to the encouragement of professionalism in the parks. Of late, the parks have had maximum encouragement in this regard.

—Barry Mackintosh

The Park Historian

Kathleen Lidfors

The National Park. Service has been an important agent of change in enlarging the profession's definition of what a historian does, providing a yeasty mix of historic preservation, interpretation, cultural resources management, and research tasks for its historians. Yet what historian among us, in the hurly-burly of a 106 action, Tax Act certification, or public review of a management plan has not secretly longed for five quiet years in a small, historical area to sink into primary sources and commune with Clio?

The park historian's niche, however, rarely comes equipped with carrell, archives, word processor, and "quiet" sign. A typical day might find the historian moving from telephone to conference table to information desk to field work to an interpretive program. Research projects are usually planned for "off-season," although even then large blocks of time are eroded by operational and administrative demands. Except in a few major historical parks, research tends to be narrow in focus and task-oriented—just enough to get the brochure, National Register nomination, or action plan written. Rare trips to major repositories tend to be guerrilla raids resulting in a few successful strikes and some intelligence information for the next foray.

Although the lack of opportunity for sustained research and writing may be frustrating, the park historian has a valuable role as articulator of resource significance and management needs in an ongoing dialog with park management, the public, and other cultural resources specialists. In many cases no one knows as well as the park historian the physical resources, the questions that need to be asked and answered, the potential sources of information, and the existing database. If that person is primarily involved in research—meaning considerable time out of the park as well as "quarantine" time in the office—the superintendent will be lacking an important member of the management team. One project may be accomplished in the course of a year, while myriad other resource and programmatic needs go untended.

Nonetheless, historical research and writing are at the heart of the profession. And, while a workload that meets research grade requirements is not realistic or appropriate in most parks, there are ways to meet historical research needs in the Service by using the specialized knowledge and professional training of park historians for the benefit of all.

Although regional staffs and DSC teams are stretched to meet the needs of parks without cultural resources specialists, qualified park historians are often bypassed when it comes to major studies. It is sometimes suggested that park historians are too particularistic in their approach, yet immersion in a park's historic resources and surrounding regional history are a distinct asset in preparing historic resource studies, historical data sections of historic structure reports, and special history studies. Likewise, why pay per diem for another historian to spend two weeks researching park files for an administrative history when a staff historian, whose tenure may span a decade in the park, is available?

What needs to be acknowledged, if the larger studies are to be accomplished successfully, is that a park historian can only occasionally take on such a project, that it may take longer to complete than it would for a project researcher with no other obligations, and that time must be programmed, as well as funding for travel and support costs. Under these circumstances, a thorough and cost-effective study can be produced. Time and money are obviously critical factors in park budgets, but whatever the approach, getting research done in a park is a matter of priorities and planning.

Other opportunities exist to make a contribution to the Service outside the perimeters of the park if the park historian has the support of the superintendent and regional office. The National Historic Landmarks program can make effective use of a park historian to conduct a Landmark study within the larger geographic region of the park. This is an

excellent opportunity for the park historian to perform professional work with a high level of peer and public review.

Similarly, with the support of the regional historians and superintendents, a historian from one park might be traded for a landscape architect or restoration specialist at another park to accomplish an administrative history, special history study, or National Register nomination.

When these opportunities are not available, however, the park historian still has options to keep skills honed and the muse alive. In his remarks at the 1985 NPS Historians' Workshop, Dr. Joe B. Frantz, then of the University of Texas, noted that academics envy NPS historians for two reasons: the size of their audience, and the immediacy of their subject—the physical proximity to the resource. Adding that "it is a sin not to write what you know," Dr. Frantz suggested that just twenty minutes of writing per day would not only leave a legacy but provide the grist for articles, papers, possibly a dissertation, or "the book."

The portions of a historian's job which do not relate to research, however, are hardly "down time" from the standpoint of professional development. A historian working in a park builds experience in applied history, historic preservation, cultural resources management, planning, museum management, and conservation methods. The park historian has an opportunity to conceptualize and participate in the full spectrum of the historical process, from the most material aspects to the most abstract.

The trained historian working in a park lives with a tension between cultural resources management concerns and the need for both the data that on-going research provides and the broader historical analysis which must guide management understanding and public interpretation of historic resources. This tension is often healthy and creative. However, operational and resource management demands often dominate, so that the historian must re-evaluate his or her role in the park and renew intellectual growth and productivity.

These needs should be addressed and negotiated during performance evaluations and preparations for IDPs, as well as upon acceptance for a new position.

Support for field historians in their research functions and professional development can be found in both regional offices and the chief historian's office; imaginative superintendents and park historians may be able to find non-traditional ways to get traditional tasks done.

Although research and historical interpretation may be only one facet of a park historian's job, it is the bedrock of the profession and the foundation for whatever actions the Service takes with historic properties in its trust. Only 51 Series 170 historians work in NPS internal programs; of these, 18 are in parks. It is important to the 18 parks that have such a specialist and to the more than 300 parks that rely on regional and DSC historians that the primary skills of historians in the parks are used to the fullest extent.

The author is historian at Apostle Islands National Lakeshore.

The Regional Historian

Jill O'Bright

What does a regional historian do? More precisely, what does *this* regional historian do, since each of the 10 regions has structured the position differently? I had to consider this question recently when I was asked to prepare an article for the *CRM Bulletin.* "Tell the readers what the position involves, and how it fits into the bigger picture," I was instructed. "Tell them what a regional historian does."

As regional historian for the Nation's heartland, I am heavily involved in cultural resources management planning, Section 106 compliance, and historical research. This involves coordinating several programs, working with various NPS offices and other agencies, and providing technical assistance to the parks.

I assumed my present position in January 1981, about three weeks after the Washington Office distributed the new (current) guidelines for the preparation of Resources Management Plans (RMPs), and I was charged with directing the development of the cultural resources management portion of the plans.

I work with park staff to identify issues, develop alternatives for their solution, and recommend action to be taken. I also work with other regional cultural resources management professionals (archeologists, historical architects, restoration specialists, and curators) to ensure that the plans are comprehensive; that is, that all known issues are addressed in the RMPs, and that the best feasible solution is recommended. Once the plans are drafted, I work with the regional programs office to make them available for review by the regional office, Washington Office, and Midwest Archeological Center. After this review, I compile the comments and transmit them to the parks. When park staff have questions concerning the review comments, I assist them, and when the revised draft plans are submitted, I review them to see that all comments are adequately addressed.

I then transmit the drafts to the State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) in compliance with the Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement requiring such consultation on planning documents. When the parks, the regional and Washington professionals, the SHPO and the ACHP are satisfied with the plans, I transmit them to the regional director for approval.

At least once every other year, I work with the parks and regional professionals to review the plans and make any necessary additions or changes. This may involve deleting projects that have been accomplished since the last revision, adding project statements for issues or needs not addressed in the prior version of the plans, or updating programming sheets. If the revisions add or change any recommendations affecting cultural resources, I resubmit the draft revisions to the SHPO and ACHP for additional review. Once compliance requirements are met, I submit the revised plans for the regional director's approval.

In FY 1987, the regional cultural resources management professionals used the Resources Management Plans and other available data to compile a regional Cultural Resources Summary and Action Program (CRSAP). It contained a statistical profile of the region's cultural resources, levels of documentation, significance, conditions, and known threats, as well as a management strategy to solve the needs identified in the resource summary. The Washington Office used the 10 regional CRSAPs to prepare a Servicewide summary and action program.

I review all plans and proposals to ensure their compliance with NPS policies and legislative mandates. The Cultural Resources Management Guidelines (NPS-28) require the National Park Service to document all actions having an effect on cultural resources with a XXX form. The XXX form identifies the resources affected, describes the proposed action and its anticipated effects, documents previous ACHP review of the proposal, and states any actions proposed to mitigate any adverse effects of the proposal. I work with park

staffs to ensure that no actions are undertaken without prior approval of XXX forms, and coordinate the review of the forms by regional cultural resources professionals. I also serve as liaison with the SHPO and ACHP to provide information they need for Section 106 consultations.

Because the regulations governing compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, are rather complex, I have prepared and presented several training sessions and briefing papers on 106 compliance. The generalized "when, why, and how-to" training, together with one-on-one training, has resulted in an excellent record of compliance with Federal mandates and NPS policies.

I am responsible for a research program encompassing all 30 Midwest Region parks. I work with parks to identify historical research needs, ensure that those needs are identified in the park's Resources Management Plans, and assist parks in seeking ways to accomplish the research. In these days of tight funding, that role extends beyond the preparation of the Form 10-238 to compete for funding. I also work with parks individually to find other ways to do research, including cooperative agreements with area colleges and universities, volunteer programs, the hiring of seasonal and temporary historians, and assisting qualified park staff members with research projects. When funding is available (we average one historical research project per year), I coordinate with the Denver Service Center (DSC) staff, the contractor, or a temporary historian hired specifically for a project to ensure timely completion of a quality product.

Over the past few years, I have coordinated research projects undertaken by DSC staff, served as Contracting Officer's Authorized Representative for two major studies done under contract, assisted park staff with a number of research projects, and monitored the completion of two historical research projects undertaken by graduate students in history as thesis topics. Overall, however, I believe our best and most cost-effective studies have been produced by permanent, temporary, or seasonal staff historians working in the regional office.

In addition to developing and directing the region's historic research program, I actively engage in research projects of my own. While funding time for such work is a major challenge, I believe the projects are invaluable in keeping my professional skills sharp, thus enabling me to handle all other aspects of the job more effectively. By remaining involved in all facets of research—identifying needs, setting priorities, programming, monitoring, advising, researching, writing, and final editing—I am keenly aware of the challenges and frustrations affecting other historians working in or for Midwest Region parks. Because I am involved at every level, I can operate the research program as a whole, without favoring (or slighting) any aspect.

So, readers, that is what this regional historian does. Sometimes aggravating, usually interesting, and always challenging, I believe it is the perfect job. However, as I finish writing this article on vacation time, I admit it sometimes makes me crazy.

The author is regional historian for the Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service.

Historians at the Denver Service Center

Harlan Unrau

Within the framework of the National Park Service's history program, the historians at the Denver Service Center (DSC) provide professional services to NPS management through numerous studies and plans intended to meet the planning, development, preservation, and interpretation needs of the parks. There are presently 10 research historians at DSC—in the planning branches of the Western, Central, and Eastern teams—which constitute the largest aggregation of such specialists employed by the Service. Although DSC historians have become involved in a variety of projects, historic resource studies, historic structure reports, park administrative histories, and special studies constitute the bulk of their work.

A **historic resource study** is an overall historical study of a park or specific area within a park. It provides basic data for a park's general management plan and interpretive program, and enables park administrators to make informed decisions on questions relating to development, operations, visitor use, and cultural resources interpretation, preservation, and management. The study, often prepared in consultation with an archeologist and historical architect, contains a synthesis of relevant historical data pertaining to the park area, including its regional setting and context, an evaluation of historic resources in the context of applicable major cultural themes, a historical base map illustrating relevant time periods or principal events, an annotated bibliography, recommendations for further study, and submissions of forms documenting eligible properties for the National Register of Historic Places.

The **historic structure report** provides park administrators with the necessary data to make informed decisions concerning preservation activities on the structure, including issues relating to maintenance, stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration. To prepare these reports, the historian, along with architects and archeologists, gathers and analyzes historical data to document the origins, construction, structural evolution, and use of a building or group of buildings.

In recent years, DSC historians have prepared a series of **park administrative histories,** intended to provide a knowledge of the problems faced and actions taken by past park managers, thus providing present and future park administrators with a more informed background about the recurring issues of the past and greater awareness for administrative decision-making. (See Mackintosh article in this issue).

DSC historians are also assigned **special studies** which generally call for short-term, site-specific research to provide data for a park's interpretive, planning, and visitor-use needs. Such studies may include research bibliography compilation, oral history, site assessments and surveys, significance evaluations, preparation of National Register nomination forms, and data for the List of Classified Structures. During the preparation of these studies, DSC historians perform research in a variety of repositories, depending on the nature of the project.

DSC historians often become involved in planning, design, and construction projects as participating members of interdisciplinary teams. In this capacity they assist planning teams in the preparation of general management plans, development concept plans, and evaluation of new areas under consideration for possible inclusion in the National Park System. DSC historians have become increasingly involved in compliance concerns in recent years, working with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and State Historic Preservation Officers to ensure that NPS actions conform to legal requirements, and taking an active role in preparing environmental assessments and environmental impact statements.

The author is a research historian in the Denver Service Center, National Park Service.

A Historian's Life at National Register

Beth Grosvenor Boland

What are you going to do with a degree in history if you don't want to teach?" is a question I heard often when I was a student. Even then the question surprised me. Surely museums, historical societies, and the National. Park Service, among others, employed historians. What also would have surprised me, however, is the degree to which many of the jobs in what now often is called the "public history" sphere require skills normally associated with the teaching profession. In fact, as a historian at the National Register of Historic Places, I variously assume the roles of teacher, student, policy analyst, critic, investigator, archivist, records manager, and others, as well as— perhaps even more than—that of traditional historian.

Although comprising only a part of the job, the traditional skills learned and revered by historians nevertheless are essential at the National Register. Among them, critical analysis, a knowledge of the use of source materials, and writing are the most often employed, with opportunities for primary research being more limited, but still important at times. Added to these must be ability to link knowledge and insight about the past to tangible resources, to "read" the historic character of those resources, and to work effectively with others in cooperative projects.

Many people are surprised to learn that the National Park Service concerns itself with the fate of historic properties that it does not own or plan to own, or at the very least, over which it does not have some jurisdiction. Yet since the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the NPS has administered an active and influential "external" program to encourage, support and assist the preservation of resources "significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture," regardless of ownership. Recognizing and documenting such resources so that they may be considered for further preservation efforts is the role of the National Register within the larger Federal program.

The basic purpose of the National Register is to build an accurate and reliable record of historically significant resources (or properties) throughout the United States. Documentation in the National Register files includes an explanation of each property's importance in representing significant themes in our past. In addition, documentation describes the appearance and condition of a registered property's historic character, and a base-point from which to monitor later changes. Information from these files is available for consultation to a variety of users: to planners in Federal, state, and local agencies who must consider historic resources as they weigh competing needs and allocate limited resources, to preservationists pursuing appropriate treatments for historic properties, to researchers studying particular historical topics or types of historic resources, and to the NPS itself in assessing important preservation issues.

Given the primary role of the National Register, the principal responsibility of the 11 historians, architectural historians, and archeologists on the National Register staff is to ensure that properties listed or determined eligible for listing in the Register meet the established criteria for significance and integrity, and are documented adequately. In addition to our individually-assigned projects in support of the overall National Register program, six of us are assigned areas of the country for which we serve as the principal National Register liaison. Currently, my area encompasses 10 states in the Midwest, Plains, and the Southwest. For the State Historic Preservation Offices, Federal agencies, organizations, and individuals in these states, I review nominations and other forms of documentation about properties; monitor adherence to National Register standards for identifying, evaluating, and documenting historic resources; offer advice and guidance on a variety of preservation issues; and conduct workshops on the National Register.

Our most obvious means of upholding National Register standards is through reviewing applications submitted to the National Park Service. In that capacity, I review state and Federal nominations and nomination appeals for listing properties in the National Register, requests for determinations about the eligibility of properties for listing, applications for certifications of the significance of properties for owners wanting tax credits for rehabilitation work, and documentation in support of boundaries for National Historic Landmarks. I ask, "Does this represent a significant aspect of our history? Is there sufficient evidence to support that significance within an appropriate context? If so, what features define the property's historic character, and does it retain enough of that character, despite alterations over time, to convey its important associations or qualities? Are the boundaries appropriate?"

For nominations and determinations of eligibility, my decisions generally are final on behalf of the Keeper of the National Register; for other reviews, my comments generally are advisory in nature. Frequently, I discuss unclear cases with other reviewers, and the staff sometimes meets as a group to evaluate difficult properties. If the case for significance is made and the property I am reviewing for listing or eligibility is adequately documented, I accept the documentation. If I have questions or see problems, I return the documentation to the nominating authority with my comments. These comments include an opinion on eligibility or the reasons that I cannot yet make a judgment, and an explanation of the information needed before I can reach a decision. Although we rely heavily upon the expertise of the State Historic Preservation Offices for knowledge of the history and resources of their states, on very rare occasions, a reviewer may conduct additional research or make an on-site inspection of a property. Neither I nor the National Register staff collectively can be knowledgeable about all areas of the country or all important aspects of the Nation's history. However, we can use our knowledge and skills as historians to assess the use of evidence, recognize credible arguments based on a critical analysis of sources, and determine if the evaluation of a property's significance and integrity is consistent with the national criteria. Also, access to the collective expertise in each state on their important historical themes, characteristic types of resources, and specific preservation problems provides us with a valuable national perspective to share.

While the most direct way in which I help ensure that properties given National Register recognition meet our criteria and standards is through the review of individual nominations and other types of documentation discussed above, it is probably not the most important way. Providing information and advice on identifying, evaluating, and documenting historic resources through review comments, over the telephone, in publishing guidance, in meetings, and by visiting state offices has always been an important part of my job, but these activities have increased in recent years. Reviewing properties and providing guidance are interdependent, of course. It is important that the National Register staff review specific properties to keep abreast of current issues and needs in the preservation world and produce useful and timely guidance, and it is equally important that we provide clear explanations and interpretations of the standards we expect applicants to meet when they evaluate and document resources.

In the past few years, the ratio between the time spent reviewing and that spent providing assistance in meeting National Register criteria and standards has shifted dramatically. Changing from reviewing 100 percent of the nominations submitted to a smaller percentage based on the past performance of each state and Federal agency enabled us to devote more time to developing written guidance on Register standards, conducting workshops, and evaluating the overall state and Federal programs that produce nominations. Also, as the field of those participating in the National Register programs has continued to expand in recent years, we have found it increasingly important to target guidance not only to state and Federal preservationists, but to myriad others as well, including local governments, consultants, businesses and private individuals, whose knowledge of history, historiography, historic preservation, and the National Register vary tremendously.

Decisions to publish guidance on a particular topic may stem from the need to articulate specific policies that have evolved over time, a desire to study a type of resource attracting widespread attention from preservationists, or to resolve controversy. Methods and sources used to prepare written guidance vary, too. In preparing guidance on surveying and evaluating post offices, I read a number of histories of postal services and Federal construction programs, and also conducted primary research in the archives and libraries of the U.S Postal Service, the National Archives, and the General Services Administration, in order to include a general historical context and an initial bibliography in the publication. I also examined the National Register's files for post offices evaluated as significant, and assembled general information on applying National Register criteria, in order to recommend a methodology for evaluation. For a bulletin explaining the National Register's policies on applying the criterion concerning significant persons, I conducted an extensive examination of National Register nominations— both accepted and returned, reviewers' comments on those nominations, policy letters, and formal written guidance materials from which to distill both policy explanations and illustrative examples. Both publications were distributed in draft for peer review and comments before completion of the final manuscript.

Another way the National Register spreads information on its policies and standards is through workshops. Most are organized for State Historic Preservation Offices and Federal agencies, but I also participate in workshops arranged by state offices in my region for their review boards, consultants, and others. I have prepared lectures, slide shows, discussion topics, and participatory exercises on conducting surveys, applying National Register criteria for evaluation, selecting and justifying appropriate areas and periods of significance, defining historic character and assessing integrity, evaluating unusual kinds of resources, and related topics.

Now that we no longer review every nomination we receive, one of the ways that the National Register staff helps protect the quality of the national program is by participating in periodic evaluations of state preservation programs. One of my on-going special projects has been to assist in the formulation of procedures used to evaluate portions of the state programs relating to surveys and National Register activities, and also to develop and refine procedures for conducting nominations audits used in each of these evaluations. When these program evaluations occur every few years, each reviewer, including myself, participates in the ones for the states with which we work.

The National Register also carries on a constant review of its own procedures and policies, and opportunities exist to contribute to that both in assigned ways and through one's own initiative. One of my assigned projects two years ago was to design and coordinate a review of the National Register criteria by a group of experts outside the National Park Service. On the other hand, it was personal interest and a perceived need that led me to rescue through the years bits and pieces of endangered records on the evolution of the National Park Service's administration of a national preservation program. I have been pleased that they occasionally have supplied the National Register with important information, and even more pleased to find the records valued by the Service's bureau historian and a doctoral candidate in researching their histories of the Service's preservation program.

It is said variety is the spice of life, and it is variety that has kept my job interesting and appealing over many years, including periods of frustration with bureaucracy. It is essential that the work be grounded solidly in the application of the standards of the profession in which I was trained, the use of nationally consistent and uniform program criteria, and the constant study of resources being identified and evaluated. But the specific tasks, areas of the country, and historical themes and resources involved in my work change constantly, and thus continue to intrigue and challenge me.

Historians in the NHL Program

Ben Levy

"Doing history" in the National Historic Landmarks program is an enviable and challenging pursuit. Despite the growing bureaucratic requirements of the job, the landmarks historian continues to do a satisfying amount of traditional history. The history is the most challenging kind because its mission compels the historian constantly to make judgments of relative significance. In other words, the landmarks historian does what a historian is expected to do—identify what is meaningful; to distinguish between the significant and the insignificant. Historians who write descriptive history are not often called upon to do this. To the landmarks historian it is routine.

Landmarks historians rely on principles traditional to the program in pursuing studies leading to the designation of National Historic Landmarks. These are thematic framework, criteria and comparative analysis. Their work begins by assignment of a theme or subtheme identified in an outline known as *History and Prehistory in the National Park System and the National Historic Landmarks Program 1987.* The thematic segment selected for study is one that has not been studied before or adequately enough. Work is done within themes following the principle of classifying similar properties into groups. Thus, the landmarks historian might be assigned Theme XIII: Science, and turning to the outline, discover that in the subtheme of physical sciences, only two sites have been identified in the facet of astronomy—the Edwin P. Hubble House, California, and the Lowell Observatory, Arizona. Obviously astronomy is an area ripe for examination.

The historian develops a study list of extant properties in the class or subclass to be studied, narrowing it to a manageable number of resources seeming to merit closer attention and possible study. The study is a compilation of National Register nomination forms known as a theme study. The study list is distilled by the application of criteria. Generally parallel to the National Register criteria, the landmarks criteria are qualified by standards national in scope.

In astronomy the historian will ask, for example, which of the many observatories in the United States are associated with discoveries of fundamental or revolutionary import or have major associations with astronomers of international or national repute? The historian bears in mind that a National Historic Landmark meets the first test—national significance—for a historic property being added to the National Park System, and must ask the question, "Does this candidate merit that kind of status?"

Lick Observatory at the University of California, Santa Cruz, was used by Herbert D. Curtis (18721942) to postulate that nebulae are island universes far beyond the reaches of our galaxy; for this and many other reasons Lick Observatory would go on the historian's study list. Buckstaff Observatory, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, was listed on the National Register in 1979 as a locally significant observatory built by a local industrialist for the general observation and study of the heavens. Buckstaff would be eliminated from the list. Allegheny Observatory at the University of Pittsburgh, an old observatory built in 1860, was, in its day, the leading observatory in solar physics. Allegheny may or may not qualify for the study list. The historian will have to continue searching the literature and consulting with specialists to make a final determination.

At the point at which the historian has identified a group of properties clearly "in the running," the component resources will be listed in ranking order so as to compare their relative significance. The historian will ask, "Is Yerkes Observatory as significant as Lowell Observatory which is already a National Historic Landmark?" or "Is Wesleyan University's Van Vlect Observatory, whose chief research problem is determining stellar Parallax, equal to either Yerkes or Lowell?"

While these questions are being addressed, the historian is also inquiring of owners and managers of the properties under study whether the resources have survived or been changed in any material way.

If it is clear that their integrity is not intact, they are discarded from the study list. If the integrity issue is clouded, an onsite visit is indispensable.

When the study list is perfected, the historian turns to less intellectual pursuits such as preparing notice letters to the parties legally required to receive information that a specific property is being studied for possible designation as a NHL. Still later, the historian will prepare second sta~e notice letters transmitting completed nomination forms and inviting comments.

When properties are designated, yet a third letter will be drafted informing the recipient of that fact and the availability of a certificate and bronze plaque; owners are encouraged to arrange dedications at which time the plaque can be formally presented.

The historian also undertakes the tedious but critical task of arranging a tightly scheduled itinerary of onsite visits. This is a potential logistic nightmare requiring a long sequence of arrangements with owners and operators to gain access and assistance. This task demands of the historian a dimension beyond the researcher; the landmarks historian, at this stage, must have a sound understanding of policy and regulations and the quality of a diplomat because invariably owners will ask how they are affected by the designation.

Returning from travel the historian writes the history of the properties visited and records a final personal judgment of this national significance. When the nomination forms are completed and approved they are compiled and the historian completes the most challenging aspect of the theme study—the introductory essay. The essay establishes the context in which the properties were evaluated and describes the intellectual process by which the criteria and comparative judgments were made.

The high point, and for many historians, the most satisfying part of the landmarks process, is the oral presentation during which the historian defends the theme study before a peer review panel and subsequently before the Secretary of the Interior's National Park System Advisory Board which recommends whether or not the nominated property should be designated. The climax of the landmark historian's work is when the Board's vote is taken.

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The Bureau Historian Job

Barry Mackintosh

The bureau historian is the single National Park Service historian concerned primarily with the history of the Service (the "bureau") rather than the history and historic resources presented to the public in its parks or addressed through its National Register programs.

The job is surprisingly recent. Although the Service hired its first park historians in 1931 (at Colonial National Monument) and rapidly expanded its historical cadre to support the many historical parks and responsibilities it acquired during that decade, no one was assigned to focus full time on the institutional history of the bureau until 1981. John Luzader of the Denver Service Center was then given this task but soon retired rather than relocate to the History Division in Washington, where the bureau historian position would be based. Even though it entailed reporting to the ineffable Chief Historian Edwin C. Bearss, I took the job in February 1982 and have held it since.

Although there had been no bureau historian in earlier years, the need for what were called administrative histories was recognized at least as early as 1951, when each area was encouraged to prepare an account of its origins and evolution as a park. The idea was to provide useful orientation and reference tools for Service employees involved with those areas. In succeeding years a few of the better park administrative histories were circulated as models. Absent someone charged specifically to oversee this initiative, little more was done to promote it. But the basic approach then taken proved a sound precedent.

That was the emphasis on individual park histories rather than a single, broad-brush bureau history. The parks, after all, are the bureau's primary reason for being. Inasmuch as administrative history is intended primarily for Service employees, it makes sense to aim it first at those employees who are most concerned with what the bureau is most about—the park superintendents and their staffs. They might find a general history of the Service interesting, but they are more likely to find accounts of what has preceded them in their particular areas useful.

In reviving the administrative history program, then, my first chores were to inventory and evaluate existing park histories, set guidelines for what they should contain, and prepare and distribute a new one that would illustrate their usefulness, encourage their production, and serve as an example for others undertaking them. The results were an annotated bibliography of older histories and portions thereof, ranging in quality from excellent to abysmal; an addition to NPS-28, the Service's Cultural Resources Management Guideline, on preparing park administrative histories; and a history of Assateague Island National Seashore, circulated to all parks with the endorsement of Director Russell E. Dickenson.

Of course, the NPS is also concerned with programs, functions, and activities transcending individual parks and extending beyond the National Park Service. Knowing that those responsible for such activities could benefit equally from administrative history, I embarked next upon a model of this genre. The topic was visitor fees—a good choice, it turned out, for its completion coincided with a major administration initiative to enhance park revenues. (Among other things, the history revealed how ridiculously low current fees were by historical standards, lending support to efforts to raise them.)

Since those first-year efforts I have cranked out several more park and program histories, the latter addressing NPS interpretation, the National Historic Landmarks Program (for the 50th anniversary of the 1935 Historic Sites Act), and the National Historic Preservation Act (for its 20th anniversary in 1986). Two other assignments have been more macrocosmic: a Harpers Ferry publication titled, *The National Parks: Shaping the System*, revising and updating Ronald F. Lee's *Family Tree of the National Park System;* and completion of a concise history of the Interior Department for anticipated publication this year.

Too often, in-house or "official" history is pretty bland stuff, eschewing anything that might be perceived as critical or embarrassing. In my work and that of others I've assisted or encouraged, I've tried to overcome this reputation. From top management on down, the response to critical analysis and candor in recent administrative histories has been largely favorable. In one case, however, my candor caused management to decide against releasing a completed history, and subsequent action by *The Washington Post* to obtain and cite from it briefly threatened my program's existence. As a result, we inserted new language in NPS-28:

> Administrative historians must follow the accepted canons of the historical profession and faithfully record all that is relevant to their subject. If there is anything in a park's background significantly bearing on NPS management whose candid discussion would seriously embarrass the Service or living persons, the Service will not undertake or sponsor the history of that park.

This policy recognized the legitimate interests of management, the practical reality that the administrative history program cannot conflict with those interests if it is to survive and prosper, and the right of historians not to be assigned topics liable to censorship or suppression. To some, however, the apparent relegation of administrative historians to "safe" subjects was offensive. In response to such criticism, Chief Historian Bearss last year suggested, "Now that the episode prompting the explicit prohibition in NPS-28 has receded, we might drop this offending language but continue to avoid, in practice, projects wherein professional and management interests cannot be reconciled."

As might be expected, the bureau historian is a primary target of requests for research help and review comment and all manner of inquiries on Service history from both within and outside the bureau. In handling such requests and inquiries, I rely heavily on support from the NPS history collection at Harpers Ferry, the custodians of our records at the National Archives, our regional and park historians, and a network of other knowledgeable contacts. If I can't answer the question or respond to the need myself, I can usually find someone who can.

The ultimate goal of the administrative history program is to have a good, up-to-date account of every System area and Service program. Obviously, there is no way I or anyone else (except maybe Ed Bearss) could progress toward that goal without a lot of help. Some of that help is coming from the Denver Service Center, regional, and park historians who are undertaking administrative histories along with their other duties. Fortunately, we're also getting some excellent contributions from outside the Service. To cite but two examples from 1987: the Appalachian Trail Conference published Charles H.W. Foster's *The Appalachian National Scenic Trail* with modest financial support from the History Division, and James A. Glass completed his Cornell doctoral dissertation, "The National Historic Preservation Program, 1957-1969," with the help of a grant from the Eastern National Park and Monument Association. Much of my time is spent encouraging and aiding such contributions from others and seeing that the results are made available to those who can benefit from them.

There's no guarantee that by knowing what's happened before, park and program managers will make the right decisions—only more informed decisions. That's reason enough for the administrative history program, and for the bureau historian job to be a rewarding one.

Publishing Historical Research

Melody Webb

To many National Park Service historians and managers, commercial publication of a study marks the pinnacle of achievement. The publishing firm, either trade or university press, provides the costly copy editing, design, and typesetting. In addition, both the individual author and the NPS receive enhanced visibility and credibility. The books also reach a larger market and are even reviewed in newspapers and professional journals. Sometimes monetary benefits can come back to the Service for future publications.

Commercial publication, however demands substantially different composition than most NPS studies. NPS interpreters, planners, and managers want as much detail as possible. Most interpreters believe that analysis gets in the way of finding the facts. They usually want raw material from which they can draw their own conclusions. In fact, they usually love long block quotations and do not seem to mind "cut-and-paste history"— history written by stringing one note card after another. As a result, most NPS studies do not merit commercial publication.

In order to qualify for commercial publication, the study must have an interpretive theme or thesis to weave the narrative together. Each chapter must contribute to the book's argument and tie in directly with the chapter before and after.

Also important, the author must step back from the narrative and provide analysis, thought, and fresh insight. New details and even new sources are not as significant as new interpretations or improved clarity in presenting complicated topics. Researchers who strive for commercial publication should lift their eyes from the topic at hand and perceive the larger picture— where the state and national context is for the study. Finally, rather than chronicling each event ad nauseam, the study should be a synthesis of well-digested facts. Details must be kept to a minimum. The author should generalize as much as possible, using selective specifics to support conclusions.

Since history is people and people want to read about people, a publishable study should characterize the main actors. Too often NPS studies provide only a name and a title. Instead, important people should become three dimensional and memorable. Contemporary photographs can be used to help describe them. Their personality traits can be derived from their writings and what others have said about them. Oral history is especially useful in characterizing people. Sometimes mini-biographies demonstrate past patterns of behavior that are significant to the story at hand.

To ensure a publishable manuscript, the NPS manager should begin with the scope of work, requiring in addition to specific topics to be covered, an interpretive theme, synthesis, and analysis. The manager should put the historian on notice regarding the quality of product expected and then during the writing phase each chapter should be monitored to ensure that publication quality is met. Finally, at the draft review stage, the manager should be thorough and demanding, requiring polish and finesse as well as clarity in writing and accuracy in factual presentations. The author should not expect an editor to clean up or cover up poor organization or writing. The book as a whole should follow an outline. Each chapter should be composed of well-crafted paragraphs with topic sentences and appropriate transitions. Active verbs move the narrative along while passive ones deaden the prose. Too many words or redundant phrases bury the meaning and soften the thrust. The punch of a sentence should come at the end, not diffused with subordinate clauses tacked on as afterthoughts. Clean, clear, precise language is elementary and essential to publication. Finally, long quotations should be paraphrased to maintain the author's tone, to ensure that the information is digested, and to avoid the appearance of unsynthesized or "pitch-fork" history.

Next to the professional quality of the book, the most important factor is the reputation of the author or the NPS manager who is trying to promote the study. Achieving a

professional reputation can be accomplished through reading papers at professional meetings, writing book reviews, and publishing articles in professional journals. Volunteering for committee assignments will also help provide visibility to press editors.

One should also establish rapport with editors of publishing houses and university presses as early as possible. Refereeing manuscripts for the press on environmental history or particular NPS subject matter will help develop a reciprocal relationship. NPS authors and managers should also seek out editors at professional meetings and discuss mutual interests.

NPS managers of historical research should be very selective in recommending particular studies for publication. One poor choice on a pet subject could destroy one's credibility and result in greater scrutiny and easier rejection of future submittals. Only the best study with the widest appeal and broadest perspective should be submitted for commercial publication. All others should be printed through the Government Printing Office.

In addition to sending manuscripts directly to the press, the author or the NPS manager can enter "best-manuscript contests." The winning manuscript is usually considered for publication. Greater publicity accompanying the contest and its winner often helps promote the eventual book. Sometimes the winning manuscript becomes part of a series and gains from the strength of other books in the series.

Some NPS studies should capitalize on the public's interest in certain topics. Well-timed studies on the Constitution, Columbus, and other anniversaries may be more marketable than others. Projects that have had high visibility, such as archeology at Custer Battlefield, intrigue the public and stimulate the desire to know more.

How, then, can NPS studies fulfill its needs and still be commercially published? One way is to write the study that is required with a lot of description, but with an interpretive thesis; then, rewrite the book for commercial publication, removing most of the details and adding analysis and insight. Another way is to write an interpretive study (as opposed to a detailed study) of a well-known topic, such as the Constitution, a biography of a President, a Civil War or Indian battle. Still another is to write an interpretive study of a fascinating natural area, such as Alaska, Big Bend, or Grand Canyon.

Generally, certain NPS studies are better suited for publication than others. A rule of thumb might be: the broader the topic the more publishable. Historic resource studies, special history studies, and administrative histories are, therefore, the most marketable. Historic structures reports are too specific, detailed, and limited to be of interest to the public.

Thus, while commercial publication is a worthy goal, NPS needs must take priority. Nonetheless, if each appropriate study were written with commercial publication in mind, NPS might produce higher quality products.

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NPCA Releases NPS System Plan

Bruce Craig

National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA) has released its long awaited nine volume *Investing in Park Futures: The National Park System Plan: A Blueprint for Tomorrow*. The Association hopes the Plan will be a source of lively discussion both within and outside the Service. According to Destry Jarvis, Vice President for Conservation Policy, the Plan not only takes a comprehensive look at the management of the NPS but specifies many of NPCA's programmatic and legislative objectives for the coming years.

Perhaps the Plan's most controversial recommendation calls for independent agency status for the National Park Service. Other recommendations focus on personnel policies and research programs, planning, interpretation and much more. Many of the recommendations touch upon the Park Service's cultural resources management program. However, with the exception of the assessment of the National Historic Landmarks Program, the NPCA Plan does not address the so-called "external" historic preservation program. There are, however, nearly 150 specific recommendations relating to the management of the National Park System and Service. The following highlights the major findings and recommendations contained in the "Executive Summary" that relate to cultural resources.

Funding

The subject of resource management has always been at the heart of the Park System's history. The much debated "preservation versus use" controversy must be constantly weighted toward preservation. Protecting parks "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations" often requires an active resources management program.

With Congressional leadership, annual appropriations for NPS resource management programs have increased modestly over the years. Increases have allowed some expansion of the program, but relative to other functions and expenditures in the Park Service budget, resource management still lags behind. A recent Government Accounting Office (GAO) report estimates that fully 80 percent of the "threats to the parks" reported in a 1980 National Park Service study have yet to be addressed.

As part of its System Plan, NPCA conducted an independent analysis of 256 Resource Management Plans (RMPs) and identified 3,979 projects (natural and cultural) totaling more than $522 million that need to be addressed. Over 40 percent of these were cultural resource projects. Preservation of historic structures topped the list and protection of archeological resources is in the top five. NPCA's recommendation for a $50 million per year expenditure seeks to begin to confront the backlog of unfunded resource management projects.

Recommendation: An increase of $50 million per year for resource management projects (natural and cultural) in order to begin to confront the $522 million backlog of identified unfunded projects.

Program Administration

NPCA's report identifies many areas in which programmatic improvements can be made to the Service's management of cultural resources. The study found that there is no effective Servicewide mechanism to address and anticipate the resource management needs of the Park System. The Association concluded that RMPs should be as comprehensive and far-reaching as possible and that they should serve as the primary management document upon which managers should make long term resource management decisions.

The report also states that the existing Resource Management Trainee Program needs to be redesigned with a greater emphasis on cultural resource management skills development. Also, the report recommends that a cultural resource specialist position be established in the Washington Office (WASO) Division of Interpretation to help bridge the gap that exists between resource management and interpretation.

Recommendations: Resource Management Plans (RMPs) should serve as the primary management tool at the park level upon which general management decisions should be made.

—Redesign the Servicewide Resource Management Trainee Program to include both natural and cultural resource management special emphasis tracks; establish 200 new Resource Management Specialist positions in the next five years.

—Establish a CRM specialist position in WASO Division of Interpretation.

Research

Among the most controversial recommendations in the NPCA report are the proposals relating to the research program needs. NPCA recommends a legislative mandate for research should be established, much like the mandate that exists for the Forest Service. NPCA found the existing natural, cultural and social research program is fragmented and suffering from little policy guidance from WASO. The report suggests that regional and park research programs should be integrated and that staffing and monies for research should be dramatically increased. NPCA found that only 2.4 percent of the permanent employee workforce (approximately 285 natural, cultural and social researchers) are actively involved in research. Consequently, a three-fold increase in the number of researchers is recommended.

Other recommendations relating to research included earmarking 10 percent of the National Park Service budget for research and creating a new associate directorship for research at the WASO level; similar regional positions also should be established. Also NPCA concluded that all park researchers should report to their respective regional chiefs and that the annual performance evaluations should be based on the OPM "Research Grade Evaluation Guide" standards.

Recommendations: Establish a legislative mandate for "research"; establish an independent research arm distinct from management and operations with base funding totaling 10 percent of the Service annual operating budget to carry out research projects, conduct resource inventories and expand monitoring programs.

—Establish an Associate Director for Research; establish a Science Advisory Board; establish a National Park Science Center; expand Cooperative Park Study Units to include more CPSUs that focus on cultural resource management.

—Researchers (those who spend 50 percent or more of their worktime conducting directed research) should be included in the OPM "Research Grade Evaluation Guide" system. They should regularly attend professional meetings and conferences and should be encouraged to interact with their peers in academia; the Service should provide opportunities for researchers to take sabbaticals to develop new skills and write major publications.

Curatorial and Conservation

The report found that great strides are being made in the computerization of cultural resource data as well as in the Service's curatorial program. The program is in competent hands due to a significant degree to the professionalism of the curatorial function within the Service and the hiring of a chief curator several years ago. The report recommends that a new WASO position of staff conservator be established and identifies the need to professionalize the conservation ability in each region; and suggests closing the Harpers Ferry Conservation Lab.

Recommendations: Establish the position of staff conservator in the office of the chief curator (WASO) to establish and coordinate a Servicewide conservation program; conduct an independent assessment of the existing fragmented NPS conservation program.

—Establish regional staff conservator positions; regionalize the conservation function utilizing "zone contracts" where feasible.

—Embrace the Office of Technology Assessment to establish a National Center for Preservation Technology.

—Provide adequate funding to continue the National Catalog program objectives.

Historic Preservation

The NPCA report found that the Historic Preservation program was underfunded but well managed. Despite efforts by NPS historic architects to inventory historic and prehistoric sites, the List of Classified Structures (LCS) is only 65 percent complete, and without complete data, it is difficult to estimate the actual dollars needed to stabilize and preserve historic structures and sites. Several other programs (i.e., the Historic Leasing, the National Maritime Initiative and National Historic Landmarks program) which addresses the preservation needs of special classes of historic structures, deserve additional programmatic attention.

Recommendations: Integrate the use of Historic Preservation Guides (HSPGs) with the Servicewide Maintenance Management System (MMS).

—Relocate the Williamsport Preservation Training Center to Harpers Ferry and place the Center under the Division of Employee Development.

—Continue the Historic Leasing program; establish a Servicewide account of lease receipts for "maintenance and repair" (as opposed to existing guidelines that provide for expenditure of funds for "administrative and other uses") of National Register and National Historic Landmark (NHL) properties.

—Increase funding, staffing and training of personnel to address the need for preservation of submerged cultural resources including shipwrecks and archeological sites.

New Parks and Boundary Revisions

There is a pervasive belief on the part of the general public that once a park unit is established, the preservation of resources within it is assured. NPCA has determined that nationally significant resources are threatened because established boundaries do not necessarily reflect the distribution of primary resources, or ensure their long-term preservation.

NPCA's boundary study indeed is a landmark document. For the first time boundaries for the entire NPS System has been prepared and analyzed. On a park-by-park basis, using the information contained in site studies, interviews with NPS personnel, resource scientists and preservation professionals, the inadequacies of boundaries for park units were documented.

Although the National Park System will never be "complete", NPCA has systematically proposed ideal boundaries for 200 units. In addition, new park areas are identified in the report including over 40 historic/cultural sites. The report also recommends enactment of legislation to transform the Land and Water Conservation Fund into a true trust fund, in order to provide an adequate and reliable source of funding for land acquisition.

Recommendations: Establish 40 or more new historic/cultural sites and enlarge the representation of sites associated with industrial, labor, ethnic and American culture (i.e., art, music, literature) themes. Areas such as Wounded Knee, Anasazi Sites, Robert Frost Home, Thomas Cole Home and Richard Nixon National Historic Site should be established.

—Expand the use of the America's Industrial Heritage Project concept to build partnerships with tourism and industry to protect park resources and promote regional preservation programs.

—Transfer the National Marine Sanctuary Program out of the Department of Commerce (NOAA) to the NPS; expand marine and submerged cultural resources protection programs.

—Establish resource-based authorized boundaries for all NPS areas; protect historic viewsheds by aligning, to the extent possible, park boundaries with natural topographic features and geographic divides.

—Transform the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to a true Heritage Trust in order to provide adequate and reliable funding for land acquisition.

Investing in Park Futures is the first such comprehensive effort to guide the future of the national park dream. The production of this plan was necessary to express NPCA's concern that the establishment of a great national park system does not guarantee that it will remain great forever. Although NPCA's report does not include strategies for implementation, NPCA and other park advocates, in the coming years, will be fashioning legislation and seeking to implement the recommendations contained in the system plan.

Copies of the complete "Executive Summary" for the nine volume National Park System plan are available for $9.95 per copy (plus $1.50 postage and handling) from NPCA. Those interested in ordering specific volumes or the complete system plan should write: National Parks and Conservation Association, 1015 31st Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007, or call 202l944-8530.

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Editor's Note: The National Park Service does not necessarily agree with all sections of the NPCA report. This article has been published for information purposes only, because the subject matter is believed to be of sufficient importance to be known by parks, states, and certified local governments.